

## Empowering Afghanistan's Disabled Population



Photo by USAID

There are an estimated one million handicapped people in need of assistance ranging from prosthetic devices to training in Afghanistan. USAID administers a survey which is the foundation for developing a national strategic plan on how to assist Afghanistan's disabled population.

After years of war in Afghanistan, there are an estimated one million handicapped people who are in need of assistance ranging from prosthetic devices to training. With a new, more democratically-oriented government in place, disabled Afghans across the country have been demanding acknowledgement of and support for their basic needs. After a recent demonstration in Kabul, the Afghan government agreed to raise a monthly stipend for disabled people from \$2 to \$5.

USAID is providing \$53,000 to support Afghanistan's Ministry of Martyrs and the Disabled to conduct surveys documenting the numbers and types of disabled which will be used to develop assistance programs with nongovernmental organizations. USAID funded the equipment and specially-designed software for the Ministry's six regional centers to conduct the survey and analyze the results. The most critical need is a national strategic plan on how to assist Afghanistan's disabled population – a plan that will be based on the results of the surveys.

This survey is just one example of a multitude of projects to show the people of Afghanistan that international collaboration by both government and non-governmental organizations is beginning to address the economic and social problems that years of war brought to the people of Afghanistan.